

Wednesday Night BIBLE STUDY

Wednesday, May 30, 2018 – First Baptist Church Buda
Midweek Prayer Meeting & Bible Study

freedom
THE GRACE OF CHRIST IN GALATIANS

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF GALATIANS
The Law of the Harvest
Galatians 6:6-10

“⁶ Let him who is taught the word share in all good things with him who teaches. ⁷ Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. ⁸ For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. ⁹ And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. ¹⁰ Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.” – Galatians 6:6-10

QUOTES ABOUT SOWING AND REAPING

Listen as the following quotes are read. What does the quote mean? Do you agree or disagree? Why or why not? How may we apply the quote to our lives?

“Don't judge each day by the harvest you reap but by the seeds that you plant.” -Robert Louis Stevenson

“If someone has offended you, start sowing forgiveness. You may need some yourself someday.” -Joyce Meyer

“Every selfish, sinful, or indulgent choice I make today is sowing a seed that will reap a multiplied harvest. And every act of obedience is a seed that will produce a multiplied harvest of blessing in my life and in the lives of those I love.” -Nancy Leigh DeMoss

“The hard work of sowing seed in what looks like perfectly empty earth has a time of harvest. All suffering, pain, emptiness, disappointment is seed: sow it in God and He will, finally, bring a crop of joy from it. -Eugene H. Peterson

“Most of us spend the first six days of each week sowing wild oats; then we go to church on Sunday and pray for a crop failure.” -Fred Allen

“My business is, with all my might to serve my own generation; in doing so I shall best serve the next generation, should the Lord Jesus tarry... The longer I live, the more I am enabled to realize that I have but one life to live on earth, and that this one life is but a brief life, for sowing, in comparison with eternity, for reaping.” -George Muller

“How frequent, how constant ought we to be, like Christ Jesus our example, in doing good, especially to the souls of men and especially to the household of faith (yea, even to our enemies), when we remember that this is our seed time, of which every minute is precious, and that as our sowing is, so shall be our eternal harvest.” -Roger Williams

“God guarantees that His Word will not return void. He doesn't guarantee that the return will be immediate. Keep sowing!” -Steven Furtick

“The things we do today - sowing seeds, or sharing simple truths of Christ - people will someday refer to as the first things that prompted them to think of Him.” -George Matheson

“Satan is not fighting churches; he is joining them. He does more harm by sowing tares than by pulling up wheat. He accomplishes more by imitation than by outright opposition.” -Vance Havner

One of the inescapable realities of life (and nature) is the law of cause-and-effect. It certain things are done, other things occur. If we ignore or break laws... man's or God's... we must live with the consequences. In Scripture this is sometimes referred to as “the principle of sowing and reaping.” Whether we think of it in terms of “law” or “principle,” we speak of the same thing. What is interesting is that this law (along with many others) is so firm, so inviolate, that not even God reverses it. Moving into this subject we shall see who this law, this principle, applies to our own Christian walk.

JESUS' TEACHING: HARVEST PRINCIPLES

Most of the Bible was originally written to those living in an agrarian society, people familiar with working the land, managing livestock, and raising crops. Many of Jesus' parables involve the farming life. Not surprisingly, then, the Bible contains many references to sowing and reaping, and here are some of the principles we learn from Jesus, Himself, and the thing He said, taught and parables He told using the harvest, sowing and reaping as examples...

4 Harvest Trust Gleaned from Jesus:

- 1. Jesus taught that we are known by what is reaped (produced) from our lives (Matthew 7:15-23) -** ⁵ “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. ¹⁶ You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? ¹⁷ Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. ¹⁸ A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. ¹⁹ Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰ Therefore by their fruits you will know them. ²¹ “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter

the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. ²² Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' ²³ And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'

2. Jesus taught that believers are to be involved in the harvest of souls for salvation -

³⁵ Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease ^[i] among the people.

³⁶ But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were ^[i] weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd. ³⁷ Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. ³⁸ Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest." – Matthew 9:35-38, "The Lord of the Harvest"

3. Jesus taught that we need to guard the soil of our heart so that the seed of God's Words may grow in it -

³ Then He spoke many things to them in parables, saying: "Behold, a sower went out to sow. ⁴ And as he sowed, some seed fell by the wayside; and the birds came and devoured them. ⁵ Some fell on stony places, where they did not have much earth; and they immediately sprang up because they had no depth of earth. ⁶ But when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away. ⁷ And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked them. ⁸ But others fell on good ground and yielded a crop: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. ⁹ He who has ears to hear, let him hear!" ... ¹⁸ "Therefore hear the parable of the sower: ¹⁹ When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside. ²⁰ But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; ²¹ yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles. ²² Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful. ²³ But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty." –Matthew 13:3-9 & 18-23, The Parable of the Sower

4. Jesus taught that the enemy wants to dilute, disrupt, and destroy what God want to sow and reap in your life, but God won't allow that to happen -

²⁴ Another parable He put forth to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field; ²⁵ but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way. ²⁶ But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared. ²⁷ So the servants of the owner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?' ²⁸ He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' The servants said to him, 'Do you want us then to go and gather them up?' ²⁹ But he said, 'No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. ³⁰ Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn." ' ' ... ⁶ Then Jesus sent the multitude away and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field." ³⁷ He answered and said to them: "He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. ³⁸ The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked one.

³⁹ *The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels.* ⁴⁰ *Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age.* ⁴¹ *The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness,* ⁴² *and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.* ⁴³ *Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!”*
 – Matthew 13:24-30 & 36-43, The Parable of the Wheat and the Tares

HARVEST LAWS: A FEW EXAMPLES

Whether one is a vocational farmer or a weekend gardener, he is familiar with the following laws

4 Harvest Laws/Principles:

1. **We reap in kind the same as we plant –**
2. **We reap in a different season than we plant –**
3. **We reap more than we plant –**
4. **We can do nothing about last year’s harvest, but we can do something about the one this year (see Job 4:8) -**

CHRISTIAN LIFE: HOW THIS RELATES (Galatians 6:6-10)

The laws just observed... facts in the realm of agriculture... are also facts in the realm of spiritual life. When one examines the variety of passages addressing this matter of sowing... reaping, planting... harvesting, it becomes evident that God is telling us, “Pay close attention to what you plant, even though it may seem uneventful, insignificant, simple, or casual.” In our passage Paul gives several ways this “law of the harvest” or the principle of the harvest relates to our lives as believers in this passage, but first let’s look at how Paul breaks down the passage in verses 6-10...

3 Part to Paul’s Words in Galatians 6:6-10:

1. **Command regarding giving (v.6) –** Paul writes in **verse 6, “*Let him who is taught the word share in all good things with him who teaches.*”** Paul addresses those who listen to the Word of God being taught. They have a responsibility that cannot be delegated away. They are to **“... share in all good things with him who teaches (them).”** In other words, the one who teaches (preaches) should expect to earn a living from his occupation. Listen to Paul’s words in **1 Corinthians 9:11-14, “*If we have sown spiritual things for you, is it a great thing if we reap your material things? ¹² If others are partakers of this right over you, are we not even more? Nevertheless we have not used this right, but endure all things lest we hinder the gospel of Christ. ¹³ Do you not know that those who minister the holy things eat of the things of the temple, and those who serve at the altar partake of the offerings of the altar? ¹⁴ Even so the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel.*”** Paul wanted the Galatian believers to develop a freedom in giving to those serving them. In **1 Timothy 5:17-18**, it appears that Paul recognized the possibility of preachers and teachers abusing their privilege by being negligent or lazy... this is implied in the phrasing, **“*Let the elders... be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching*”** (emphasis added). It should be noted that just as easily as a pastor can abuse his responsibility, so can a congregation... by failing to adequately support its shepherd.

2. **Reminder of “Harvest Law” (vv.7-8)** – Notice Paul’s words in verses 7-8, *“Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. ⁸For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.”* The term “mocked” has the idea of “turning up the nose” or “treating with contempt.” One who turns up his nose at God... sneers at Him... doesn’t change the immutable law of harvest. God doesn’t suffer, man suffers. Paul follows this reminder with a statement of the principle, *“...whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. ⁸For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.”* Paul was discussing morality. Let’s put the principle another way, practically speaking, “We cannot expect to harvest the field of holiness after we have planted in the field of carnality. At this point we should remember the second law of harvest... we reap in a different season than we plant.
3. **Encouragement to continue... regardless (vv.9-10)** – Here are Paul’s words in verses 9-10... look at it... Paul says, *“⁹And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. ¹⁰Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.”* Both time and energy are recognized by the apostle, *“⁹And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.”* It is so easy to wear out while “doing good”... too many meetings... people... appointments... demands... banquets... prayer meetings... Bible studies... So often, these things bleed our perspective. We forget why we are to continue. Paul stresses the perspective “You sow now, you reap later. Be careful!”

The Lord gives principles in Scripture to serve as warnings and as an encouragement to us. Paul’s word here in this passage, given under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, give us an example of this. In Galatians 6:7, His Word states, *“Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap.”* Every farmer understands the meaning of this principle: We reap what we sow, more than we sow, and later than we sow. Let’s look at each part of the principle to make sure we understand its full implications. Remember in our passage Paul gives several ways this “law of the harvest” or the principle of the harvest relates to our lives as believers

4 Implications of the Principle of Harvest:

1. **The principle applies to everyone, both Christians and non-Christians.** - This principle is irrevocable; there is no escape, either for the believer or for the unbeliever. It is a law of life. Again, did you notice how Galatians 6:7 begins? It says, *“Do not be deceived, God is not mocked.”* Herein lays the root cause of the careless and indulgent lifestyle of many people. They are deceived. They either do not believe the truth, or they think they will somehow be the exceptions to God’s laws. To mock God is to turn up one’s nose at Him, to hope to outwit Him—a foolish thought, as 2 Corinthians 5:10 reveals, *“We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.”* If you were required to appear before the judgment seat of Christ in the next five minutes, what kind of crops would you have to show?
2. **We reap what we sow** - The fact that we reap what we sow is good news for those who sow good habits, but a frightening thought for those currently involved in ungodly activities such as promiscuity, drug and alcohol abuse, neglect of family, or mistreatment of others in order to climb the ladder of success. We cannot sow crabgrass and expect to reap pineapples. We cannot

sow disobedience to God and expect to reap His blessing. What we sow, we reap. Let us not deceive ourselves: We will reap the harvest of our lives.

3. We reap more than we sow - Why do farmers plant their seed? Because they expect to harvest a great deal more than they sow. A single seed that sprouts can yield dozens, scores, even hundreds of seeds. It is the same way with both sin and righteousness—a small decision to do either good or bad reaps a much bigger crop, for either joy or sorrow. Jesus used the picture of a sprouting seed to show that when we allow God’s Word to produce good things in us, the results multiply: “The one on whom seed was sown on the good soil, this is the man who hears the word and understands it; who indeed bears fruit and brings forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty” (Matt. 13:23). On the other side of the ledger, the prophet Hosea describes what awaits those who choose to sow seeds of wickedness: “They sow the wind and they reap the whirlwind” (Hos. 8:7).

4. We reap later than we sow - Some are deceived because their present seed does not appear to be producing an immediate crop. So they continue down their course, mistakenly believing that there will never be a harvest. But unlike the crops of the field, which get harvested at approximately the same time each year, there is no regular timetable for the harvest of life. Some crops we reap quickly; others take a long time. But do not be deceived—their season will come. And by going the second mile now and giving more than is required, we will reap rich dividends later.

OUR LIVES TODAY: HOW THIS APPLIES

Four bits of counsel can be taken from this study and applied directly to our lives.

4 Applicable Pieces of Counsel for Our Lives:

1. **Let us share** – If you are being taught well and served well, then give generously to your shepherd.
2. **Let us sow to the Spirit** – Remember, the harvest is directly related to that which is planted. There are no miracle crops.
3. **Let us not lose heart** –
4. **Let us do good** – If your weariness is the result of simply not seeing the benefits of your labors, stay faithful. If, on the other hand, your weariness is caused by over-activity, then seek balance.